

CHAPTER 287

May 27, 2014

“Justin, this is by far the stupidest thing you’ve ever done.”

Sunglasses on his head, a wide grin on his face as his feet hit the pavement beneath him, the roar of an engine buzzing in the air. It would be hard to picture Justin as anything but a badass right now, but alas, when you considered that he had just spent a shit ton of money on something he really didn’t need when he had a lot more shit on his plate that he **WOULD** need that money for, well, suddenly he looked a lot less like a badass and more like an asshole. It was like saying ‘Hey, you want money for the kid? Well fuck you, you ain’t getting a dime, cause I just spent it all.’ That wasn’t what he was doing of course, but that didn’t mean Chie approved anymore of him throwing money out the window. It was like he was suffering an early midlife crisis... But then, there was a lot happening in his life that he hadn’t expected to happen for decades. I guess he was just really advanced for his age or something. Though that gave him a rather bad gut feeling he might keel over at the age of thirty if he kept going at this rate, like some kind of rapidly passing by life cycle coming closer and closer to its inevitable end. He smirked a bit, twirling a pair of keys around his finger like a hula hoop, not bothering to consider even locking the doors behind him.

“Whaddya think? Got it super fucking cheap, but she still shines like a diamond.” Chie raised her eyebrow with curiosity as Justin referred to the hunk of metal behind him as a ‘she.’ She was really hoping Justin wasn’t gonna be one of those guys that treated cars like people, because there was gonna be a serious conflict of interest here if that was the case. Furthermore, she didn’t think highly of it; partially as a result of the blatant waste of money, partially because it wasn’t exactly in tip top condition. I mean granted, it wasn’t broken or anything like that, but it was all dusty and muddy, and it just looked like it hadn’t seen the light of day for a century. It was a black mustang, an early model and used from the looks of it, but while it was a really slick shade of black, that only made every little thing that had died and decayed on it over the last few years stand out like a light in the dark.

“I think you don’t need a car so I’m not sure why you decided to buy a car other than to piss me off.” Chie remarked snarkily. He didn’t really go anywhere off-campus, so it wasn’t like he needed transportation to get from place to place, but rather it seemed he bought it just so he could say he owned a... ‘nice’ looking car. Mustangs were nice vehicles after all, even as old and worn down as this was. American made car too, they weren’t quite as easy to find her in Japan, so somehow Chie doubted it was as cheap as Justin claimed it was.

"Don't need one? I don't think you realize how much we're gonna need to travel around when you pop that thing out." Justin countered just as aggressively, pointing at her stomach as evidence. She really wasn't a fan of the imagery she got from the word 'pop' in this context, and it sent a bit of a shiver down her spine. Still, as douche as that remark rubbed Chie, she did have to admit he had a point. They couldn't just walk to the pediatrician with a stroller, could they? There was also the matter of getting back from and to the hospital once her pregnancy started to advance a bit more and they needed to see a doctor on a regular basis. Because the bus is really the last place you want to be when your seven months pregnant.

"That's... true, I guess... But... why THAT car." Chie questioned, curiosity getting the better of her. One, it was an American car, so it was definitely more expensive here than if Justin were to get it back in San Diego. But more importantly, she would have thought he'd pick a more... not necessarily expensive looking car, but more intact car. He ignored the question for a moment as he took a moment to soak in the appearances of the slick black car in front of him. The engine was still running, buzzing through the sky in a sound that was so sweet to Justin's ears. He grinned a bit as he pulled back, adjusting his sunglasses a bit and sticking a cigarette in his mouth. Chie didn't even say anything about his smoking habits anymore. He had quit a while back, but the stress of everything going on, it was understandable he would revert back to his old ways. It was just surprising to see him having such a cool head about everything right now, and still needing to smoke to keep himself from flipping out. It was an oddly drawn line he was dancing on. He lit the cigarette up and took a quick drag at it before stepping back to Chie's side, finger extended to point out every little detail of the automobile.

"Finally, nothing moves. High noon. Black top rolling below the asphalt drive. A concrete fascination scraping the edge of nothing. The wheels of my Mustang exploding on the highway like a slug from a .45. True Death: 400 horsepower of maximum performance piercing the night." Justin took another drag at his cigarette, smiling warmly as he basked in the sleekiness of his recent purchase. "This is Black Sunshine."

"You... named the car." Chie mumbled with exasperation. She wasn't really sure why she was surprised in retrospect; he seemed to have a way with names given how quickly he had seemed to pick out a name for their kid... Of course it was a girl's name and Justin thought they were having a son, so that counted for very little, even if they weren't to consider the fact that Chie had just as much say in naming the kid as Justin and they'd really need to talk it over before deciding anything. Point was, it was like he got some kind of kick out of naming stuff. She wouldn't be surprised if she found out one day he had a tank full of goldfish or a collection of rock pets and took the opportunity to name each and every one of them.

"After a White Zombie song no less. Was gonna call her Black Betty, but then I decided that was just begging for some sort of Dukes of Hazzard bullshit where I have to jump over a bridge; so I passed on that one." Justin beamed with pride, as if he had done something seriously good by dodging a completely non-existent bullet. Of course, there was the issue of what the song Black Betty was about given the circumstances, and Justin would rather not have his car be a reminder of how much he fucked up as well. Still, his pride in his car slowly faded as he realized Chie was really not amused by all of this. She wasn't even sure she understood why this angered her so much; Justin's money was his own, and while he did have responsibilities, she couldn't rely on that all her life, could she? They both had to chip in, and so long as Justin did his part, whatever he did with the rest of his money she could give less of a damn about. Or so she thought; yet here she was, anger welling up inside her as she tried to make heads or tails over what could have possessed Justin to think now was a good time to buy a car. "You don't look too happy about it."

"It's your money, it's your car. I don't know what you were expecting me to say." She tried to pretend she wasn't ticked off about this, but it clearly showed. Like she might have tried to hide the anger in her voice, but her words still held power behind them that made it clear she didn't approve. Justin tried to feign a smile all the same, trying to pretend he couldn't tell she was livid. No, he had plans, he couldn't let her fuck this up again just because she was in a pissy mood. Not this time.

"Come on, why don't you take a ride with me? I'm sure you'll love it." He tried to convince her with a warm smile. He had a pretty good idea where he'd drive to. It was late in the afternoon, and soon the night sky would fall upon them. If they hurried up, they might still be able to catch the sunset, shimmering in the waters of the riverbank in Inaba. Alas, Chie just was not giving him the inch he needed to make any of his grand ideas work. She shook her head, pouting ever so slightly.

"I don't think so." She objected rather bluntly. "I've got stuff I need to do Justin. Like, I don't know, figure out what we're doing with this baby. Maybe you should do the same." She shook her head and sighed with exasperation before turning to walk away. Justin's jaw dropped a bit, a sad expression sweeping across his face. Oh sure, he spends some money on getting a car they were gonna need, and suddenly he didn't care. Suddenly he was the bad guy. It didn't matter what he planned to do with this car, or anything like that, because in her eyes every cent Justin owned was now property of the fetus in her stomach. Justin supposed he should have been angry, but all he was was heartbroken. He sighed to himself before turning about to head back to the driver's side door, opening it up, the sound of his radio playing lightly flowing from the vehicle and into the parking lot.

The sound of a burned cd playing cheesy love ballads. The shine of a ring sitting in the glove compartment.